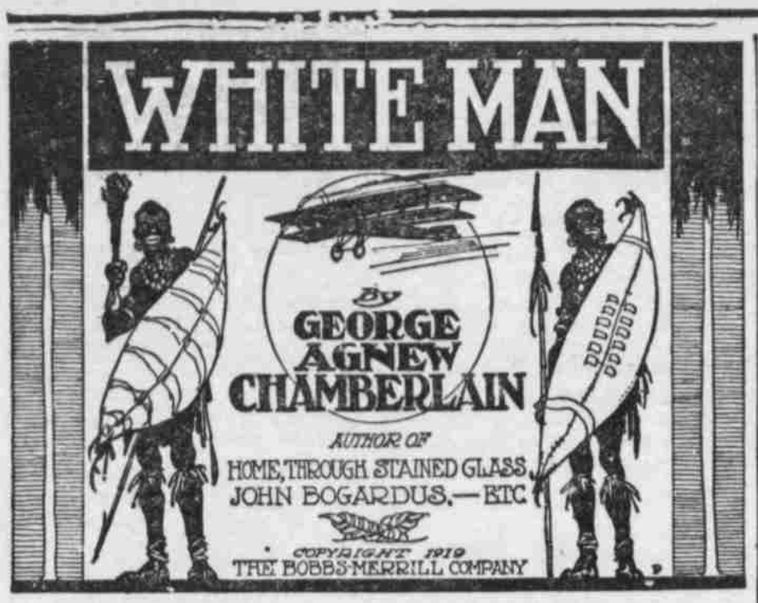


CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

—10—

"And I you," breathed M'sungo. He slipped to his knees, took both her hands in his and looked into her eyes as though he could never take his fill of the sanity that had come back to them.

"Andrea Pellor," he went on, "before you have time to think about it I want to tell you that you and I can never feel shame again. I want you to know that no man, however mean or tarnished by life, could do the intimate things that I have done for you and will still have to do, without feeling the pangs of a love that is rooted outside the limits of passion."

He dropped his eyes as though before a confessional. "Until I saw you quite helpless, until I saw you pass to the other side of pain, I didn't know that I had a heart. I had a strange conception of love as a thing that you give generously to dogs, sparingly to men and never to women except as a last surrender to the unknown."

He paused; Andrea smiled faintly. "And now?" she prompted.

"Now,—" he answered. "Now I know that a man must travel far beyond the limits of every-day emotions to come up with love itself. He may find content and drowsy happiness in some woman possessed of all the qualities that command affection, but love itself dwells far beyond at the crossroads of weakness and strength. And so your helplessness, carried to that last degree, has wound itself around my heart with a grip that will never loosen."

"Poor White Man!" said Andrea.

"Whether you want me," he continued gravely, "or mock me, whether you are true or untrue, pure or impure—all those things no longer matter, for love is an integral possession. You may leave me, put the width of the world between us, and the breath of your body will still be the breath of mine, the surge of your blood will be the surge of mine; your sins will be my sins, because your helpless self, stripped of all the clogs of flesh, has twined itself for always with the fibers of my heart."

"So you would give three pounds for me," murmured Andrea.

He let go her hands and rose quickly to his feet. "You are stronger than I thought," he said. "No, I'll never give a cent for you. I'll wait till you're well and then I'll take you in free fight and in my own way."

But Andrea did not hear him; she had sunk back lax into her pillows. Two tears crept from under her closed eyelids and down her hollow cheeks. "I'm so weak," she whispered, "so weak I can't cry."

The white man cursed himself aloud. No one knew better than he that it is not won when the tide of battle turns, and that he who sleeps on the verge of victory awakes to defeat. He settled down to the long vigilance that was his price of peace. The day and a night came and went before he could draw the long, quivering breath of relief that marked the passing of danger.

During the stage of convalescence he read and talked to her by the hour, but the time came when she would have no more of the printed page. He had spoken a passage here and there from the book of his own life and now she demanded the volume from cover to cover. He told her of his boyhood in a New England country town, of scrapes in school and of the disaster in college that had turned him from the narrow road of specialization in the diseases of the nose and ear to that broad highway which is trod lightly and aimlessly by stray dogs and citizens of the world.

"You would have made a great physician," said Andrea, almost regretfully.

"Perhaps," he replied. "But I wouldn't have saved myself. I would never have found myself. I would have been one of those unconscious mortals who spend their lives in a group picture. I would never have found out that there is something within me that utterly rebels against all those isms which aim at the collective classification of animal man and whose goal is the herd instead of the individual."

"But isn't that old stuff?" asked Andrea, yawning for the first time in many days.

"No, it isn't," said the white man thoughtfully, "and I'll tell you why. Never for centuries has intrinsic life been so close as it is today to its true level of proportionate valuation. What was worth living for yesterday, isn't a justification today. Food, raiment and a baby-grand measure less in the thoughts of true men than do truth, honor and the final quality of mercy." He sat for long in an absorbed silence.

"Tell me," said Andrea, "how the production of a million dollars' worth of fiber is an expression of the individual."

"Now you're trying to pull down the star to which I've hitched my personal wagon," said M'sungo with his slow smile. "Well," he continued, "take it, handle it, but let it go again when you're through with it, because I need it high up and far ahead. When I realized that that M. O. wasn't a liar, after all—"

"White Man!" broke in Andrea and leaned forward. She stared at him wide-eyed and flushed of cheek. "Are you Trevor?"

He nodded.

"Robert Oddman Trevor?"

"Robert Trevor," he confirmed and simplified.

"Oh, White Man!" she cried again, dropping her hands into her lap and gazing at him with an intensity that slowly drove the blood from her face. She was sitting in her hammock-chair, propped against all the pillows the camp could produce. She took a long breath and then she spoke again. "Will you do something for me—a little thing?"

"Why ask?" said Trevor.

"Well, it's like this," said Andrea. "I want to kiss you." She turned her eyes from his face and continued rapidly. "It needn't mean anything, of course. Nothing binding, you know, on either party. Only, you, see, anything might happen to me at any moment; I might fall ill again and just pop off. So—if you don't mind—I'd like to do it now, please."

Trevor's face presented a puzzle that nobody saw, for Andrea's eyes were anywhere but upon it. He arose and came hesitatingly to kneel beside her chair. "Well," he said and she almost laughed at the weird quaver in his voice, "here I am. G—go to it."

She put her arms around his neck and came blindly toward him. "Andrea," he protested, "aren't you going to look in my eyes?"

She shook her head. "No," she whispered, "it isn't that kind of a kiss."

Her soft moist lips on his mouth were as light as a flower that sways to its mate in the cool breath of the morning, salutes gently and recedes, fearful of bruising.

"There!" she cried, sinking back on her pillows. "Now go on about the star thing."

Trevor, a dazed look in his eyes, mopped his brow, returned to his chair and obediently repeated, "When I realized that that M. O. wasn't a liar after

"Are You Trevor?"

all, and that my flying days were really over, I had to look around for new steering lights. There are just three things in the world today: winning the war is number one, and after that come education and transport."

He nodded to himself as if in confirmation. "I picked Transport for my star. My mission is to ships and railroads. I believe in all reverence that together with education they can be welded into the second coming of our Lord, bearing peace and not a sword. If you can only see my star high enough and far enough away, you'll know that it shines on a world beyond blasphemy."

He looked at her anxiously, as though he feared she might stay among the shallows while he was trying to show her his depths. She nodded. "Go on."

"Beginnings," he continued, "always look small measured against ambition's end, so I don't often look so far ahead. Just now my eyes are fixed right here, on this soil of Africa, because from her overflowing breast I've drawn my stake of a million. That's a bit mixed, but it's clear, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Andrea. "Go on."

"Another thing that is written in the book of great truths, which, by the way, is the primer of the citizens of the world," continued Trevor, "is the axiom that success begins at the point where a man stops asking for favors and starts giving them. You'll get the connection when I remind you that the possessor of a million of anything can always give favors."

"A whole cotillion," agreed Andrea.

"Having a million, I shall have no difficulty in building a railroad across Africa with other people's money, and having built one, I shall build another and then another. To put it in a nutshell, I might say that from now on all my prayers will be stated in terms of miles of roadbed—what you English call permanent way. Other and greater men have built empires; I should like to knit them together."

"When are you going to start?" asked Andrea.

"I've started already," answered Trevor. "I've got my stake and a steamer besides; that's pure velvet now-a-days."

"I'll tell you when you really started," said Andrea. "The moment you connected your inner flame with the star of Transport."

"You're coming on," said Trevor, pleased at her remembering.

"And why," said Andrea, "have you never once played the phonograph?"

"Eh!" exclaimed Trevor, his mind turning somersault. "Look here," he protested, "are you trying to bowl me over with my own philosophy of contrasts? What the devil has the phonograph got to do with stars and inner flames? The d—— thing isn't mine—that's why I never use it. It's tainted by its prospective ownership."

"MacCloster," mused Andrea aloud. Her eyes flashed a smile at him. "Well, anyway, I know it's going to be awfully jolly."

"What? The phonograph."

"No, silly. Building railroads."

CHAPTER X.

From that day Andrea's health began to mend with tremendous rapidity. Trevor never tired of watching her; never ceased to wonder at a recovery so rapid that its daily transitions were visible. It reminded him of one of the marvels of his boyhood. An old man had said to him one dawn, "Hear the corn growing, sonny?" and he laughed, whereupon the granddad had taken him by one ear and marched him to the nearest furrow. "Pick out a stalk and watch it, you little egg-sucker," he commanded. "See it grow, if you can't hear."

Andrea was like that; she was unfurling as though in the morning of a new youth. Never had her eyes been brighter, never her cheeks so quick to play with fire. Incidentally, she was full of a devil of mischievous reminiscent innuendo.

"It's all a great joke now, young lady," Trevor would defend himself, "but if you'd seen what I have of pernicious malaria, you'd keep grave for a year. I've seen three Swahilis that had nourished mosquitoes from their youth up, fall like dogs, one after another, within a mile and a half of an infected camp and the best of them went stone blind for a month."

"Did you nurse them, White Man? Did you see them through?"

These were the questions that drove him nearest to desperation, but the gleam in the eyes above the demure mouth from which they issued invariably warned him of the trap in time. He was on his guard; he knew that there were things between him and Andrea that speech would turn into ghastly skeletons walking by day and which only consistent silence could entomb. But so deep had grown his sympathies that even in this he understood her. It was not that she was perverse, but that her pride demanded a constant test of his loyalty to her other self—that internal self that had lain bared, revealed and helpless in his arms.

About those things which might have aroused a legitimate curiosity, she asked few questions. Without a word of inquiry she saw him despatch twelve picked men on some mysterious mission whose intricacies and importance necessitated a preliminary palaver of an hour's duration. Equally silent, she watched his detailed preparations of a well-appointed safari. Tents were brushed and set to air; cots and mattresses put out for a sun-bath; provisions of all sorts packed in one-load cases; water boiled, filtered and hung in canvas coolers. Only a few days before, just such signs as these had made her heart heavy with unanswerable questionings, but her illness had changed all that. The successive moments of the throbbing present each in its turn filled her whole horizon.

She knew instinctively that he had something big up his sleeve, and that he would shake it out on the slightest provocation. She also had a long memory, and had no difficulty in recalling his exact boast as to what he would do when she was well. He was going to take her in free fight. She was well now, she reflected; she had never felt better in her life, and if there was one thing she hungered for more than another, it was the promised combat.

There is no telling how long Andrea's innate stubbornness would have held out, nor at what point Trevor's exasperation would have driven him, for their wordless contest was interrupted by an event which he had both foreseen and feared. They were sitting at a table after dinner on a cloudless night, brilliant under a full moon, when a far-away sound came to disturb their purposeful silence. Trevor straightened in his chair and leaned forward, his whole body tense in the effort of listening. It came again, a ghost of a sound that gradually assumed substance and rhythmic form until after five long minutes it was recognizable as the cadenced rumble of an African river chantey.

Instantly Trevor was on his feet. He issued orders to Bathtub, who immediately began to clear the table and eliminate every item of furniture that would indicate a dual occupancy of the white portion of the camp. They had dressed that night for dinner, not as a celebration or any special event, but because they were both bored with too much time on their hands. Trevor now excused himself to Andrea and withdrew to his room. In a few minutes he reappeared garbed in his roughest khaki shirt and trousers. His face was grave as he advanced on Andrea with a nod toward her hut. "MacCloster will be here in half an hour," he stated. "I ask you to go to your room, close and bar both doors and stay there until I call you."

Without waiting for her comment, he turned and left her. She sat on, with narrowed eyes, until she had finished her cigarette, and then, with a glance around to see if Trevor were watching, she arose and walked slowly across the open court of the craal. In her breast was a great rebellion at the curt manner in which he had made his request, but she had to admit to herself that no other form of address, coming from him, could have impressed her so deeply, moved her so quickly.

She went to her room, closed the front door, but did not bar it, chose a book and sat down to make a pretense of reading. The sound of the chantey rumbled near and then wavered afar according to the bends of the river, but in spite of this variation the sum of its volume swelled steadily in an ominous approach until it died quite suddenly at the boat landing.

There was a distant rattle of a dozen punting-poles dropped across the thwarts, a spoken word or two that carried marvelously across the still night, and then a long silence suddenly shattered by a bellowing voice: "Ship ahoy! Show your port and starboard lights, d—— you. How in the h—— d'you think I'll make the channel?"

Andrea rose quickly and laid her ear to a crack in the door. Her pulse was beating fast, but she was smiling. She heard Trevor come out and presently she heard him speak. His voice was almost unrecognizable, it was so cold and so incisive, like sharpened steel. In strange incongruity, the words he let fall were like drops of molten metal.

"Hello, MacCloster, you dirty, drunken brute! What's your price to go away from here tonight? I can offer you a case of Bols and all the kaffir dogs in the craal to see you off."

The words and their manner astounded Andrea; for a moment it seemed to her that these two men must be joking. Then she felt the impact of an undercurrent of malevolence such as she had never in her life imagined, much less encountered. She quivered to the thought that here was Trevor absolutely without gloves at last, every word an intentionally naked blow.

"Trevor," said MacCloster in an oily voice that was strangely softened and indescribably aggravating, "I like you. I can't help likin' you; you're so d—— unbiblical. Not a whisper about a sanguinary fatted calf. You go right to my heart with a case of gin. I accept; bring it out."

"No," said Trevor, "I'll send it up. I'll have it waiting for you by the time you get back if you don't rot and fall apart on the way."

"There you go," said MacCloster, pleasantly, "always cheerful, warm welcome on your tongue." Then, with a change that was like a thunder-clap: "Send it up, you dunghill bantam! Why the h—— haven't you sent my music box?"

Andrea pressed her hands, her face and her whole body against the door. She was trembling slightly, but she was not frightened; her intelligence was too busy. It had leaped to an understanding of Trevor's part in what was going on outside. She forgot that she had ever thought it a mere battle of tongues. She could imagine this man, MacCloster, as a mountain of brawn and sinew against which Trevor was deliberately opposing all the moral weight of the old fighting slogan, "Bully a bully!"

More than that; she could now feel that the suppressed hatred she had guessed at their words had come boldly into the open and that it was in a sense labored and forced only because its intensity was beyond actual expression. These men were stripped to almost unbelievable nakedness—rapier and broadsword, lapping, thirsting mightily for heart's blood and nothing less. In comparison with her own little struggle with Trevor, the encounter assumed the proportions of a meeting of elements.

"I didn't send it," said Trevor softly, "because I didn't want to remind myself you were still unburied. Besides, it looks so clean—"

"I know," interrupted MacCloster. Once more his astonishingly flexible voice changed its tone to one of unfeigned calm. "I can understand, of course," he remarked conversationally, "you dislike the idea of carrion in conjunction with the virgin polish of a mahogany box. Well, let's have a look at the thing."

"I don't remember having seen you so sober before," said Trevor, in the same easy tone, and from it's sour-

she knew he had turned toward his room.

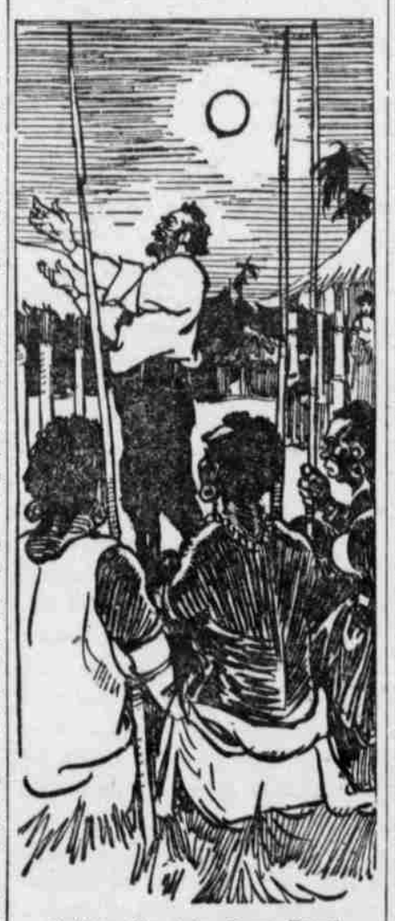
"Enforced, I can assure you," replied MacCloster. "Been strapped on the wagon by lack of the neces—"

The sound of his voice was cut short by the closing of Trevor's door.

Andrea opened her own, just a crack, and looked out. In the very center of the circular court squatted in a ring a dozen half-naked boat-boys. Their torsos were still glistening in the moonlight from the sweat of their labor. They all seemed dull of face but mighty of muscle. None, not one, of Trevor's people was in sight—a very surprising fact, for the African loves a gossip with the stranger within his walls.

There was quite a long silence; then came the muffled tones of the phonograph, rising bell-like through the night in a climbing aria from "Faust." Suddenly the sound wavered, swerved and fell to a wrangling of frightened notes as though some one had swept the instrument from its balance. A second later there was the thud of a heavy boot on wood, Trevor's door flew open and the still wailing phonograph was hurled as from a catapult fifteen feet through the air. It fell to the hard-beaten ground of the patio with a terrific splintering crash, rolled over on one side and was still. Andrea's eyes had been watching it, fascinated; now they swerved and stopped almost with a click of the suddenly arrested muscles.

Between her and the door of Trevor's hut stood the towering figure of a man in quarter profile. She could



It Was the Aria From Faust.

see his great shock of bushy red hair, a bit of his shaggy beard, his enormously broad shoulders and the white gleam of his two hands hanging almost at his knees. He was hatless and dressed in faded blue dungarees many sizes too small for his bulk.

As she watched him he raised his arms in a wide still gesture and began to sing. At the first note, quite unconscious of action, she let the door swing open and stepped out on the veranda. It was the aria from "Faust," the same aria, but oh! how different. The voice of this man was like a huge and glittering serpent of sound that writhed smoothly into the air, challenging the dome of heaven itself.

If there was one thing that Andrea knew better than another, it was the accurate valuation of every operatic voice that had sung in Europe during the last decade. She had been taken to Covent Garden regularly before she was out, as a matter of education, and no less regularly after her eighteenth birthday, as a matter of matrimonial business.

She knew instantly that this extraordinary apparition in the wilderness was nothing less than the solution of a world mystery. He could be but one man and that a person whose tremendous triumph had been so short as to leave him with fame but without a name. She was hearing the Great Voice—the voice of the star that had shone for a single night; resounded but once through the Scala, set as swiftly as it had risen and disappeared forever, leaving behind no trace beyond a memory so short that it had become a recollection almost unbelievable to the few that had heard it.

Now her ears were filled with its music to the exclusion of thought or reason or consciousness of self. She became nothing more than a sentient channel. The easy power of the Voice lifted it beyond the common standards of vocal classification and gave it the allure and the terror of the superhuman. Its tenuity seemed a thing incorporated apart, an actual substance with beckoning arms and hands. It drew her slowly, steadily out into the quivering moonlight, held her, lifted her face with it toward the sky.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Sea-Island Cotton.

Practically all of the sea-island cotton is produced in the states of Georgia, Florida and South Carolina, the finest coming from the chain of islands off the Carolina coast. It is well named sea-island cotton, as when grown away from the coast the fiber rapidly degenerates into upland cotton unless seed grown in the islands is obtained for planting successive crops

Witnessing Wisely

By REV. HOWARD W. POPE
Moody Bible Institute, Chicago

TEXT.—And ye shall be witnesses unto me.—Acts 1:8.

Witnessing for Christ is a Christian's principal business in life. He may and doubtless will have some occupation in which he spends much of his time and whereby he earns his livelihood, but his main business is to witness for Jesus Christ. This was the Master's last command to his disciples and the most important one. He gave them specific directions where to begin and how to expand their work until they had reached the uttermost parts of the earth. This command has never been revoked and in principle it applies to us as directly as it applied to the apostles who heard the command from the Master's lips.

Witnessing does not mean that we are to stop every person we meet and begin to talk religion to him. Such a course would probably be unwise and in a short time bring us into such disrepute that the value of our testimony would be seriously impaired. In order to witness effectively one ought to observe certain rules.

1. Choose an opportune time and place. It is not wise to stop one who is running for a train to inquire about his soul; neither is it the highest wisdom to give a hungry man a tract. Far better give him a cup of coffee. Then, while he is sipping the coffee, you can give him the gospel.

It is a good plan to lay people under some slight obligation. If your neighbor in the car has no paper, buy one, and after glancing at it, pass it to him. After he has read it the most natural thing is to open conversation about the news of the day, and from this you can pass to more important topics.

Remember that persons are often more ready to talk about religion with strangers than with those whom they know. Remember that the Holy Spirit is all the while convicting people of sin, the providence of God is continually softening hearts and preparing the way for some one to drop in the good seed of the gospel.

2. Watch for souls as those that must give account. When an insurance agent is introduced to a man, his first thought is, "How old is that man, and how much life insurance does he carry?" and he isn't long in finding out, either.

So should it be our business, when we meet a man, to think of his soul and the possible ways of helping him.

Do not always walk home from church the same way and with the same person. Join some one who is not a Christian and give your testimony as you walk along.

3. Obey every prompting of the Holy Spirit. It required some grace for Philip to leave a great revival at Samaria and journey down the desert road to Gaza on on unknown errand. If he had been like some Christians, he would have argued with the Lord about the matter until he had missed his opportunity; but, as it was, "he arose and went," without one word of remonstrance. He arrived at the crossroads just in time to intercept the treasurer of the great Ethiopian empire, and he had the joy of leading him to Christ. Had he arrived five minutes later, his journey would have been in vain.

One of the secrets of success in Christian work is to obey the Spirit promptly. Dr. A. C. Dixon was hurrying to church one night when he saw three young men talking by the wayside. Just as he passed he felt led to speak to them. He went back, and asked whether they were Christians. Two of them replied in the affirmative. He then invited them to church.

The one that was not a Christian said, "We haven't time to go, as we are cramming for examinations."

Doctor Dixon simply replied, "Are you ready for the great examination, my friend?" and passed on.

That night the young man that said he had not time, came to the service and accepted Christ. He is now a preacher of the gospel.

The writer was walking down the street one day when he met a friend, who said to him, "Howard, don't you expect to become a Christian some time?"

"Why yes, I presume so. I suppose every one expects to become a Christian some time."

"Don't you think it would be a wise thing if you were to accept Christ as your Saviour now?"

"Probably. If it is a good thing to do at all, I suppose the sooner it is done, the better."

"Well, Howard, will you accept Christ now?"

I hesitated a moment, and then answered, "Yes." And that is the way I was led to Christ.